



Citoyenneté et  
Immigration Canada

Citizenship and  
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# FOCUS

Integration • Inclusion

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For a fair and welcoming French-language community in Ontario

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**La Passerelle I.D.É.** is a non-profit  
organization created in response to the  
integration and economic development  
needs of young Francophones from the  
various cultural communities of Greater  
Toronto. Founded in 1993, La Passerelle  
is recognized within the French-speaking  
community for its leadership on issues and  
matters affecting its clientele.

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visit [www.etablissement.org](http://www.etablissement.org).

# About ... Commitment

By: Wilma Jenkins  
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2008-09 turned out to be a very creative year for French-language program activities. A number of programs and projects were set up in all the cities targeted for Francophone immigration. The CIC regional office in Toronto and the local offices in Ottawa, Windsor, London, Hamilton, Toronto and Sudbury all worked very hard on several initiatives involving recruitment and integration of French-speaking immigrants.

The CIC subcommittee on immigration to Francophone minority communities put considerable effort into achieving its vision for French-speaking communities, which thrive on the vitality, strength and richness of Francophone immigration. As befits this vision, a richly diversified French-speaking Ontario will become a model of social, cultural, and economic vitality.

As part of the *Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities*, the Directorate of Settlement and Intergovernmental Affairs, Ontario Region, organized a conference, in Toronto, on February 4 and 25, and on March 10, 2009. The conference, which involved three workshops, brought together federal departments and provincial ministries working with French-speaking immigrants. The purpose of the initiative was to use a theoretical model based on the Business Transformation Enablement Program (BTEP) and apply it to all programs targeting Francophone minority communities in Ontario.

In his opening speech, the Commissioner of Official Languages, Graham Fraser, highlighted the crucial contribution Francophone immigration makes to French-speaking communities across Canada. "Although the number of immigrants is small, they are a crucial demographic factor for the survival of

these communities, since circumstances tend to favour their integration into the linguistic majority."

The ultimate goal of the BTEP project is to provide departments with a common understanding of strategies developed to support the vitality of Francophone minority communities, as well as the role departments can play in implementing these strategies.

Participating provincial ministries and federal departments will share a common vision of the major challenges facing these communities. They will develop a common approach in making decisions based on priorities, policy, strategies and implementation of programs by the government of Canada and the province of Ontario. In addition, they will improve their analysis, performance, effectiveness and planning capacity.

Participating ministries and departments will also be guided in their policies, programs, services and resources by a common language and structure designed to respond to the needs of Francophone communities, and thereby achieve the best possible results.

The BTEP model-based conference is one of a series of programs developed by CIC, Ontario Region, in an effort to improve collaboration among ministries and departments that develop initiatives aimed at French-speaking immigrants. Work on Francophone immigration issues has led to impressive growth over the last five years. Throughout the coming year, Citizenship and Immigration Canada will work to set up several more initiatives to help Francophone immigrants successfully integrate into their new communities.

# Promotion and Recruitment

## Attracting Francophone Immigrants to Northern Ontario: An Approach Based on Academic Success and Economic Integration

The immigrant Francophone population in Northern Ontario, especially in Sudbury, the region's largest city, is made up mainly of students registered with the area's two post-secondary institutions, *Collège Boréal* and Laurentian University.

This in itself is ample reason to pay special attention to immigrant students as a means of increasing immigration in that part of the province. *Collège Boréal* is piloting a project whose name is also its mandate: *Attract, Retain and Integrate Immigrant Students*. This initiative, which focuses on academic success, economic integration, falls under the auspices of the Northern Ontario Francophone Network.

### Economic Integration

The economic integration of immigrant students is one of the project's new features. *Collège Boréal* currently offers part-time employment opportunities to newcomers. This gives them a measure of financial freedom, but more importantly, it allows them to acquire much needed experience in the Canadian labour market. A number of immigrant students are working as promoters in their home community, selling candidates on the idea of opting for something other than big city life. Academic success and economic integration are very strong incentives for choosing to settle in the Sudbury community.

Economic integration of immigrant students is also achieved through collaboration and a strategic partnership linking *Collège Boréal* to a variety of community organizations. They include such business groups as *Association culturelle professionnelle africaine de Sudbury* (ACPAS) and *Regroupement de jeunes gens d'affaires* (RJGA) at *Collège Boréal*. ▶▶▶

1 Within the context of this project, the expression *immigrant students* refers to all students born outside Canada and includes foreign students who have been granted a study visa or refugee status. Immigrant students may have been recruited from abroad, in Ontario and elsewhere in Canada. However, it should be noted that immigrant students having a study visa fall outside the client group targeted by CIC programs.

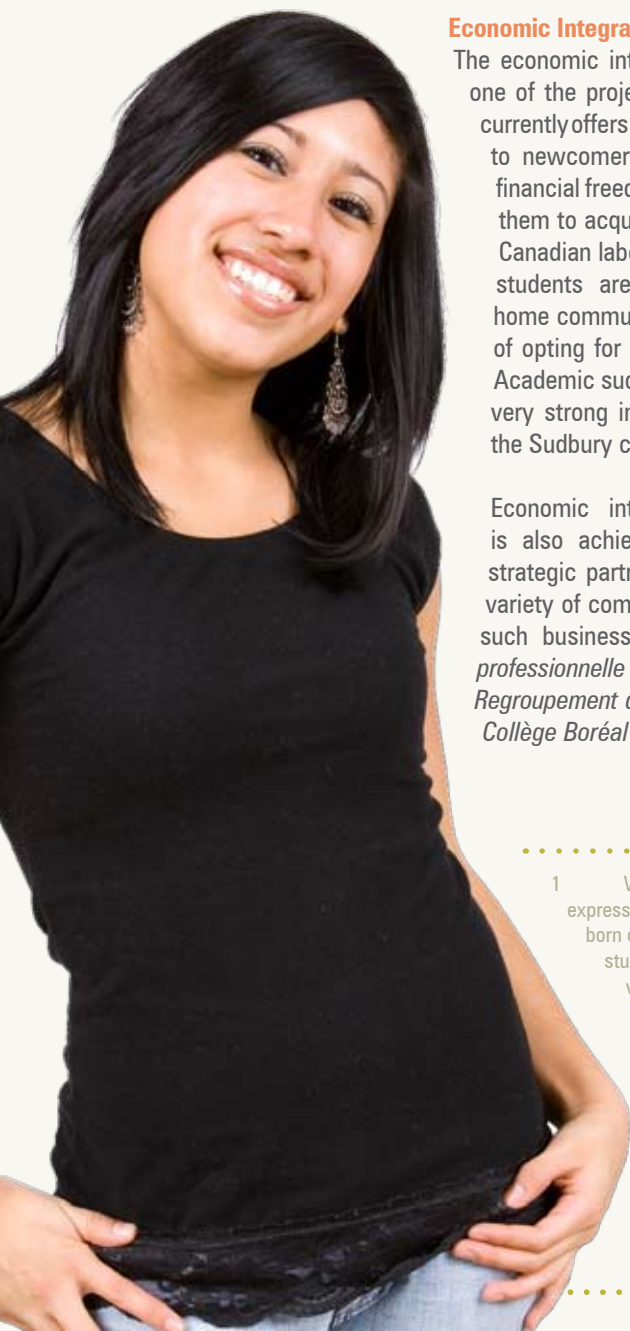
### Academic Success

The project helps ensure that newcomers achieve academic success right from the start through a host program. Immigrant students taking part in this program have access to a range of settling-in services including:

- ▶ airport, train or bus station reception services;
- ▶ assistance in finding housing;
- ▶ a five-day orientation session one week prior to on-campus registration to help newcomers find their way around the city and campus buildings, make new contacts and build a support network. In the process, participants acquire new tools that enable them to lead an active college life and make the most of their educational experience;
- ▶ assistance with registration;
- ▶ support in navigating the city, on campus and through the course of study;
- ▶ mentoring by peers, i.e. the new student is paired with a 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year student also involved in the same program in order to help the newcomer adapt to college life.

To improve their chances of achieving academic success, immigrant students are also offered the following:

- ▶ services from a team of specialists in areas such as study management, French, English, mathematics, science and computer science, in addition to a credit course in applied metacognition designed to improve work and study methods for students experiencing difficulties;
- ▶ peer tutoring services for immigrant students requiring special support.





The ACPAS contribution is a significant one because it involves both the retention and economic integration of immigrant students. ACPAS members are not only mentors to immigrant students, but also a source of inspiration. Exchanges with mentors as part of the project are an opportunity for students to make new contacts, build up their networks, and learn about job opportunities, all of which make it more likely that they will find gainful employment and put down roots in the region.

As a provincial youth business organization, the RJGA is a first among Francophone colleges in Ontario. It seeks to establish ties with the Sudbury business community, helping would-be entrepreneurs in this way to put classroom learning to practical use. Immigrant students are very active in the organization. They are supported by various partners including the *Regroupement des gens d'affaires* (RGA) of the Sudbury district, *Collège Boréal's* employment centre and other related services such as Job Connect.

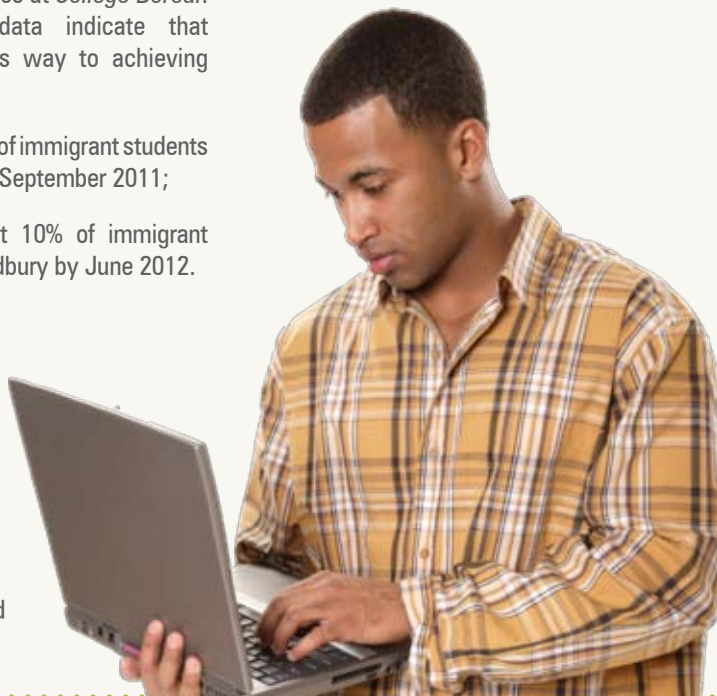
### Special Features

The project focusing on the attraction, retention and integration of immigrant students was launched in October 2007. It has helped to enhance existing services at *Collège Boréal*. Preliminary evaluation data indicate that the project is well on its way to achieving objectives, namely:

- increasing the number of immigrant students in Sudbury by 15% by September 2011;
- ensuring that at least 10% of immigrant graduates settle in Sudbury by June 2012.

The process of attracting and retaining immigrants is one that requires long-term planning as part of a sustained and coordinated effort involving multiple organizations committed to acting together. Recommendations issued

by a major think-tank on *la francophonie*, held in Sudbury in November 2008, support this vision.



## Second Anniversary of **Etablissement.org**, Website Dedicated to French-speaking Newcomers to Ontario



The **Etablissement.org** website, proudly celebrating its second anniversary, has emerged as a uniquely indispensable settlement information and referral resource for a wide variety of users from around the French-speaking world.

### Background

In a survey conducted by the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) in 2004, French-speaking newcomers to Ontario clearly favoured the creation of a website to provide them with information and guidance on all aspects of settlement in Ontario. The website would provide them with essential information in French, which is often scattered and hard to find, in order to speed up settlement in their host province. As a result, in

March 2007, OCASI, which had built the Settlement.org website eight years earlier, created **Etablissement.org** with funding support from CIC and the Office of Francophone Affairs.

### Visitors from All Over the French-speaking World

Web user data supplied by Google Analytics show that the number of visitors to the site, numbering 9,400 in February 2009, is constantly increasing. Visitors from more than 100 different countries have been to the website. Approximately 55% are Canadian, mainly from Ontario and Quebec. Visitors from France rank second with close to 25% of all visits originating from that country, followed by Morocco and Algeria (nearly 7% combined). U.S. and Belgium visitors account for about 2% each, followed by Switzerland, Tunisia, Ivory Coast and Ireland, each totaling less than 1% of visitors. It is interesting to note that there are two types of French-speaking visitors: the majority are new (or prospective) immigrants to Ontario; the rest are French-speaking workers in the process of settlement who need information in connection with their work.

**Comprehensive, Unique, Reliable Information**

The two-year old website has assembled, all under one virtual roof, a veritable goldmine of relevant information about settlement and pre-settlement. It covers all aspects of life in Ontario in key areas such as employment, housing, health care, child and adult education, French-language services and immigration. This information used to be scattered and difficult to find or understand. But based on an accurate assessment of the information needs of French-speaking immigrants about settlement, Etablissement.org was able to cull through the scattered data and repatriate the most relevant information, making it available in accessible language and formats to those in search of a new life in Ontario.

Visitors from more than  
100 different countries have  
been to the website.

**55%** Canada

**25%** France

**7%** Morocco and Algeria

**2%** United States

**2%** Belgium

**1%** Switzerland

**1%** Tunisia

**1%** Ivory Coast

**1%** Ireland

The information packaged by theme is displayed to visitors in the form of well-documented articles, written in an easy-to-understand language. Information can also be found through links to expert websites offering authoritative information in areas of interest. Similarly, Etablissement.org follows and regularly posts the latest news and events of interest to its visitors. Equally noteworthy is its *discussion forum*, one of the most popular pages on the website, which offers more personalized information.

*Etablissement.org provides access to all essential French-language resources, which can help French-speaking immigrants settle in Ontario, or prepare prospective immigrants for the realities of life in Ontario.*

**The Forum As a Personalized Information and Referral Tool**

The *discussion forum* at Etablissement.org is a key area because it is the most interactive, allowing for direct contact with visitors on topics relating to immigration and settlement. Since the site's primary mission is to inform new (and prospective) French-speaking immigrants about the realities of life and requirements for settlement in Ontario, it is essential to provide visitors with the answers they seek. And like the articles featured in the website, the answers provided in the discussion forum are the result of extensive research, and supplement the information found in related articles.

A large number of questions deal with sponsorship, the right to asylum, problems experienced by certain categories of immigrants, in particular skilled workers, and questions pertaining to permanent resident status. Employment and job-related issues are another very hot topic, specifically employment opportunities, obstacles, especially those faced by foreign trained professionals such as access to the job market and the recognition of foreign credentials. English as a second language is the third most-frequently-asked-about issue.

These popular themes help guide the choice of headings and sub-headings, along with hot topics and "known" issues. Themes covered in the discussion forum are also chosen on the basis of statistical data and feedback collected at meetings and workshops designed to promote the website.

**Something New**

Etablissement.org provides access to all essential French-language resources, which can help French-speaking immigrants settle in Ontario, or prepare prospective immigrants for the realities of life in Ontario. Other than the issues mentioned previously, Etablissement.org provides a guide called "First Days," which contains all the information newcomers will need during their first two weeks in Ontario. This information is also useful to foreigners who plan to immigrate to Ontario. Etablissement.org also features a "Close to Home" heading, under which are listed the resources and services provided to French-speaking immigrants in every city across Ontario. Always attentive to the changing information needs of its visitors, Etablissement.org remains a proactive information source, posting relevant articles in different subject areas, such as informing French-speaking newcomers about Franco-Ontarian culture and the French-speaking media; explaining how bilingualism works; providing information on the rights of immigrants as they relate to French-language services; explaining the French-language school system, and identifying colleges and universities that offer programs and courses in French; citing resources designed to improve job skills in French and/or in English, as well as available French-language employment services.

*A number of promising projects are now underway, including the completion of a series of educational videotaped interviews with experts on key topics such as social housing and the quality of French-language services offered in Ontario.*

**And The Work Goes On...**

A number of promising projects are now underway, including the completion of a series of educational videotaped interviews with experts on key topics such as social housing and the quality of French-language services offered in Ontario. Equally noteworthy is a project that will lead to the creation of an online system to centralize all French-language activities and workshops run by Francophone agencies, as well as the development of a job search tool combining Francophone and bilingual employment opportunities.

## Tapping Into the Skills and Experience of Newcomers to Strengthen Ontario's Economy

It's clear that newcomers are key to Ontario's economic future. Getting newcomers into the workforce is vital not only to their success, but to the economic prosperity of the entire province.

In order to build a strong economy, Ontario needs to put the education, skills and experience that newcomers bring to good use. This is why the Ontario government supports programs that reduce barriers to employment and help newcomers apply their skills in their area of expertise as quickly as possible. Since 2003, the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration has provided over \$85 million for 145 bridge training projects. These projects have helped over 20,000 skilled newcomers get the opportunity to land jobs that match their qualifications and experience.

Ontario's programs help newcomers bridge their international credentials and experience into Ontario qualifications. Each bridging program is different, but can include an assessment of education and skills, clinical or workplace experience, skills or academic training programs, preparation for a license or certification examination and occupation specific language training.

While many of the programs funded serve all immigrants, some are specifically geared to French-speaking newcomers. For example, Ontario recently provided funding to *La Cité collégiale* for its Immigrants Accessing Construction Trades bridge training program.

This new project is uniquely tailored to assist French-speaking internationally trained individuals in the Ottawa region in construction related skilled trades. It allows newcomers with international education and experience in the skilled construction trades to get Ontario work experience and qualifications. The program offers practical and theoretical courses in specific skilled trades. It provides higher level French language courses including occupation-specific French language instruction, basic and intermediate level English and assistance to get

skilled trade job placements or apprenticeships in construction related skilled trades.

French-speaking newcomers, including Mohamed Ali Azzabi of Tunisian origin, began the program at *La Cité* in November 2008. Mohamed Ali arrived in Canada in September 2008 with his international credentials as an Industrial Equipment Electrician and Industrial Maintenance Technician.

When Mohammed Ali arrived in Canada, he took different academic courses to add to his knowledge and thus obtain equivalent standing. After several months of lecture courses, he no longer knew what he wanted to do professionally. In October, he heard about the construction trades access program for immigrants offered by *La Cité*.

*"I was intrigued by this program, so I went to meet with the people who were running it. They had adapted courses that met my needs. They also directed me towards a number of choices that were available to me, said Mohamed Ali.*

*"Thanks to the La Cité collégiale program and the people who have accompanied me throughout this learning experience, I know I will succeed in my chosen career."*

The Ontario government has a long history of working with newcomers like Mohammed Ali so that they can settle, work and succeed in Ontario. Newcomers want the chance to demonstrate their talents and skills and bridge training programs give them this opportunity. In a global economy where Ontario competes for skills and business, we need to capitalize on the diverse skills and international experience that immigrants bring to the workplace. Tapping into this great human capital is a win for businesses, a win for newcomers, and a win for Ontario.





# Francophone Communities

## Mental Health: Responding to the Needs of Immigrants

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) is the leading teaching hospital in drug addiction and mental health in Canada. It has transformed the lives of people battling drug addiction and mental illness by applying the latest scientific discoveries and through integrated, humane clinical practice, health promotion, education and research. Given the diverse needs of its clients, and because it seeks to provide treatments tailored to the needs of specific groups, CAMH has set up specialized programs for women, couples, families, the elderly and young Francophones from Africa and the Caribbean.

One project involves the adaptation of cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT)<sup>1</sup> to facilitate the integration of Francophones from Africa and the Caribbean, and can serve as a model for other immigrant communities. Indeed, the Centre has plans to develop a linguistically and culturally adapted intervention model as well as a resource manual. Project results will also be closely tied to other complementary initiatives on the issue of diversity, which are currently underway.

In the first phase of the project, documentary research was conducted to determine the different categories of factors which directly impact the mental health of target immigrant populations. In all, six categories, each made up of sub-categories, have been defined. This will help guide the documentary research into specific factors.

### Goals

The documentary research now makes it possible to carry out a feasibility study. This will lead to the development of a therapeutic intervention model based on the cognitive behavioural approach, i.e. a manual with all the necessary templates. In this way, therapists and other mental health professionals working with immigrant population groups will be able to provide culturally adapted services.

The documentary research will provide the necessary context to better understand the general mental health needs of French-speaking communities from Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America, and English-speaking immigrants

### Objectives

Documentary research is designed to achieve the following:

1. Develop three models of intervention based on cognitive behavioural therapy and guidelines for health care service providers in the Toronto region working with French-speaking immigrants from Africa and the Caribbean, Latin America, and English-speaking immigrants from the Caribbean.
2. Use results to develop three resource manuals for health care and related professionals.

### Description of the Process

1. Feasibility study involving the use of a modified intervention for depression in French-speaking immigrants from Africa and the Caribbean in Toronto.
2. Feasibility study involving the use of a modified intervention for depression in Spanish-speaking immigrants in Toronto
3. Feasibility study involving the use of a modified intervention for depression in English-speaking immigrants from the Caribbean in Toronto
4. Use of the results from all three studies in the development of a resource manual for health care professionals working with these population groups.

from the Caribbean. Literature from Canada and abroad contains only a very small number of studies on mental health, especially on the mental health of French-speaking communities. But there are nevertheless many studies that deal with issues directly related to the delivery of mental health services to communities in the areas of alcohol and drug abuse, including drug addiction.

Each group is supervised by a principal researcher who is also an accredited psychiatrist. The last objective is to study the possibility of offering new training in cognitive behavioural therapy and resources to health care professionals. With these tools, professionals would be better equipped to lead group sessions, or provide individual treatment in community health clinics where a large number of immigrants are battling mental illness.

Study results will be published in three easy-to-follow reference manuals as well as in scientific journals focusing on mental health, services and policy, public health, primary care and international migration. Results will also be presented at scientific meetings locally, nationally and internationally.

Mental health problems linked to recent immigration are sometimes acute. Cognitive behavioural therapy, though strictly a short-term treatment, can lead to sound long-term integration for newcomers, and provide help that is better suited to settled immigrants.

The cognitive behavioural adaptation project is funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and was initiated in September 2008. Project completion, including distribution of manuals, is scheduled for the end of March 2010.

<sup>1</sup> Cognitive-behavioural therapy is used to help persons with depression problems. Depression currently affects one person in three worldwide.

## Global Experience Ontario

*Helping newcomers build a stronger more competitive Ontario*

When internationally trained immigrants arrive in Ontario, they are looking to put their international education, talents and skills to work by finding employment in their field. The Ontario government through Global Experience Ontario (GEO) is here to help.

GEO is a one-stop service for internationally trained individuals, providing information and referrals on how to navigate the process of obtaining a license in various regulated professions. The centre also provides advice on internship and mentorship programs and runs the Ontario government's Internship for Internationally Trained Individuals. The Internship Program provides newcomers to Ontario with the opportunity to gain Canadian experience within the Ontario government. Now in its third year, the program has placed over 200 internationally trained individuals as interns in 22 Ontario ministries.

GEO is located at 163 Queen Street East in Toronto. Staff are available in person, via email, or by telephone to help explain the process for licensing and registration in Ontario in both French and English.

Newcomers have found GEO's services very useful. Mr. Adil Hasan, originally of Pakistan, went to GEO in November 2008 looking for information on how to get his qualifications recognized in Ontario. Mr. Hasan arrived in Canada in August 2008 with his international credentials as a French language teacher. After meeting with GEO staff, Mr. Hasan now

has a plan and is on his way to getting his credentials recognized so he can work in his field.

*"The staff at GEO was very kind and helpful and gave me valuable information on how to get my credentials recognized in Ontario. I am very hopeful and have many ideas to share with others."*

Other feedback from those who have used the centre include the following:

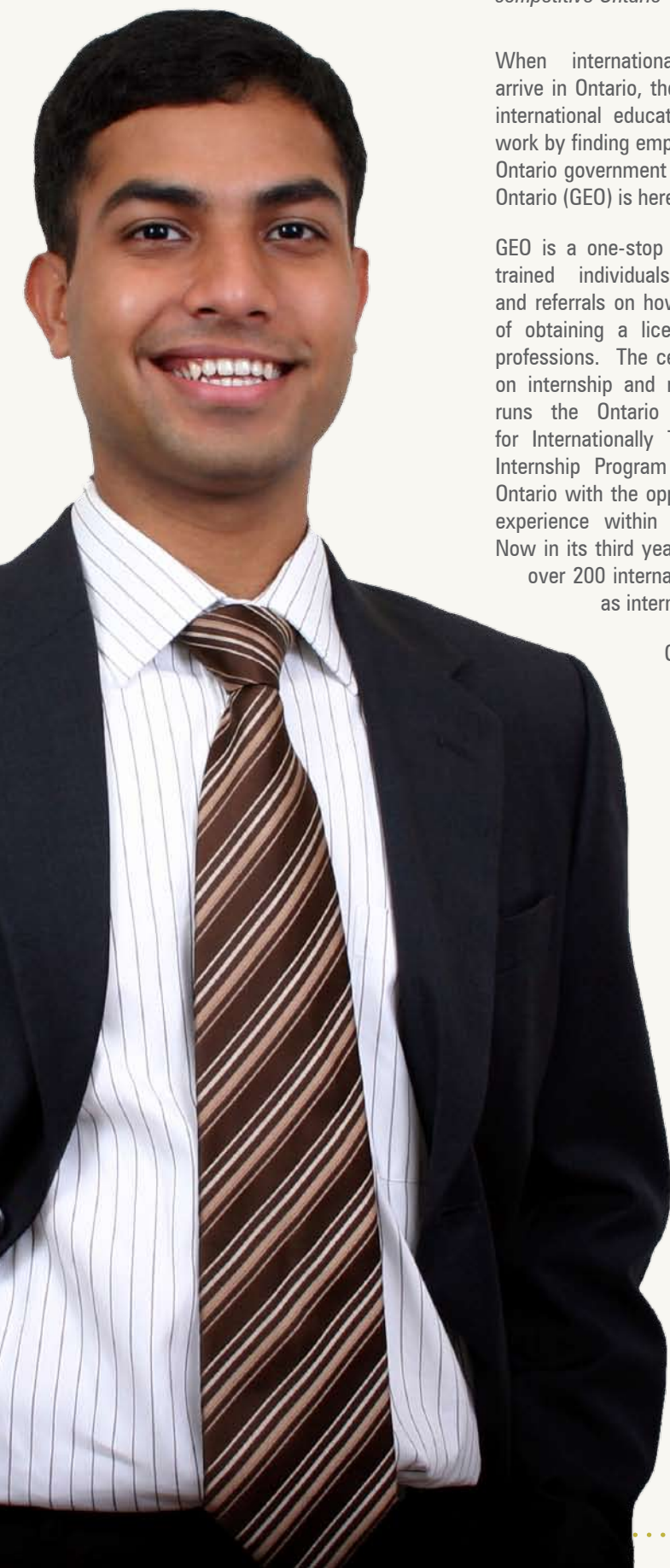
*"I am completely satisfied with the information obtained and with the good service offered by Global Experience Ontario. This really helps a lot."*

*"Global Experience Ontario is strongly recommended for any foreign national or resident in Canada. When I went there, I found an attentive staff, ready to provide me with information about all my concerns regarding social integration and integration into the workforce in Canada."*

Getting newcomers into their field is vital not only to their success, but to the economic prosperity of the entire province. This is why the Ontario government supports programs and services that help newcomers to work in their field as quickly as possible. This includes language programs, settlement services, bridge training programs and Global Experience Ontario.

### Contact Information:

Global Experience Ontario (GEO)  
163 Queen Street East, 2nd Floor  
Tel: 416-327-9694 or toll-free 1-866-670-4094  
E-mail: [geo@ontario.ca](mailto:geo@ontario.ca)  
[www.citizenship.gov.on.ca](http://www.citizenship.gov.on.ca)





## Finding a Home

A number of services and initiatives are available to help new immigrants settle in the Francophone minority communities of Ontario. The overriding goal from an economic, social and cultural viewpoint is to help French-speaking newcomers successfully integrate into these communities. Yet, many have expressed disappointment at not being told about all the services available to them. The first years in Canada are the hardest, and isolation can become a serious issue if immigrants are left without a support network. To prevent this, Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) has funded the production of a French-language video entitled *Finding a Home*, which has been produced by Toronto-based Endless Films Inc.

This documentary informs newcomers about the availability of French-language services. It deals with some of the difficulties they encounter in the settlement years by featuring immigrants who have gone through various experiences. In that way, newcomers can see that they are not alone in their quest for a new life.

Dissemination of helpful information about living in Ontario is an important aspect of CIC's work. Making this video available at various points of entry into Canada, through French-language organizations and settlement service agencies across Ontario, will enable CIC to communicate with newcomers as they begin their new adventure to guide them toward available services.

Staff at Endless Films gathered testimonials from people across Ontario including new-

comers and long-time residents. The production company visited Hamilton, Sudbury, Ottawa, London and Toronto, meeting with people who agreed to share their stories on film—including their highs and lows—to help others following in their footsteps. While telling their stories, they demonstrated that what unites them is a common language and the need to fit in as they first set out to build a new life for themselves in Ontario.

New immigrants expressed many concerns and worries, but the families and individuals who used services in the process of settlement acknowledged their positive impact on their well-being. Some relied on the Host Program matching services to get them through the tough times when they felt most depressed and lonely; others called on the school system for help and relied on various programs to ease the transition for their children. Nevertheless, some of them admitted that they were very frustrated by their inability to get hired in their field of expertise, their search for affordable housing, and the lengthy legal process when seeking refugee status.

A combative spirit and a positive attitude: these are the two indispensable traits immigrants must have in the first years of settlement. This is well illustrated in the documentary which features an immigrant recounting her settlement experience in Toronto in 2007:

*"It's true that it's not easy..., and coping with all these problems is hard on morale. I needed two things: willpower, without a doubt, but more than that—determination. I needed determination and perseverance."*

The video does a good job of getting established immigrants to tell their stories, affording them an opportunity to share lessons learned with those determined to follow in their footsteps.

A large number of organizations dedicated to welcoming and assisting newcomers as they settle across Ontario lent a helping hand in the filming of the video. The staunch commitment of their people is the common denominator. Workers in these organizations devote their lives to helping immigrants build a good life in their new country. Huge efforts are made on their behalf through a wide range of services and tools such as settlement services, services for children, health care services, legal services, host programs, housing assistance, post-secondary education and training programs, as well as support services and counseling for victims of war and hate crimes.

Discovering a new life—a real future—in a new country is not easy. New immigrants have many different needs. They must find housing, learn the language, find a job, enroll their children in school, build a support network, and adapt to a new culture without, of course, losing their sense of self. The video is an excellent tool for French-speaking immigrants, in the sense that it points them in the direction of services specifically designed to help make their transition easier as they get busy building a brand new life in Ontario.



# Economy - Jobs - Recognition

## LINC Guidelines for Levels 5 to 7

The Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program offers adult newcomers basic language courses in one of Canada's two official languages in order to facilitate their social, cultural and economic integration.

In January 2008, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Settlement and Intergovernmental Affairs Directorate, Ontario Region, mandated the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks to develop guidelines for teaching French LINC at levels 5, 6 and 7.

The Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB) is a centre of expertise that supports national standards in French and English to describe, measure and recognize mastery of a second language for adult and prospective immigrants who want to live and work in Canada.

### Project Objectives

The two primary objectives in developing the guidelines are to create a pedagogical handbook for teachers of French as a second language, to coordinate and standardize teaching French LINC across Canada.

The level 5 through 7 courses are aimed at improving student capacity to communicate properly in French in order to facilitate social integration. They form the intermediate stage of education in French as a second language education.

### Project Description

The CCLB developed twenty (20) modular competence acquisition units to enable students to properly prepare for educational, employment and social interaction situations in Canada. These units include examples of practical role-playing, such as meetings, interviews and telephone conversations.

Integration activities corresponding to the twelve (12) LINC program themes have been developed. The themes are as follows: at home in my community and the world; banks and finances;

Canada; Canadian culture; Canadian law; commercial services and business; community and government services; education; employment; the family and human relations; health and safety; travel and transportation.

Since employability represents a major challenge for many adult students, an entire section of the educational guide is devoted to this issue. It covers integration into the work environment and job retention.

The guide also emphasizes lesson planning to provide concrete support to teachers of French as a second language. It also suggests techniques for assessing students' mastery of the language.

The educational guide entitled *National Guidelines for the LINC 5 to 7 Program* became available in June 2009.



# Regionalization

## The Central and Southwestern Network Forging Ahead!

Efforts at the Central and Southwestern Network are mainly focused on providing support to the CIC National Steering Committee and the Ontario Sub-Committee for francophone immigration as they strive to meet the objectives set out by the *Strategic Plan to Foster Immigration to Francophone Minority Communities*. After nearly two years, the Network is on track and resolutely forging ahead.

Beginning in December 2008, the Network has worked hard at the grassroots level, taking on a dual role, namely:

- ▶ Empowering French-speaking communities through workshops designed to build and strengthen the capacity of service organizations in the areas of hosting, settlement and integration of French-speaking immigrants;
- ▶ Facilitating organizational development, organizing consultations and setting up planning meetings at the local level.

### Empowering Organizations

To further empower local organizations, the Network has spearheaded a series of workshops to assist organizations in navigating the grant application process with success. The workshops were a direct response to the high rate of rejected grant applications among French-speaking organizations by four major funding providers: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Canadian Heritage and the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration.

The first workshop, held on December 1, 2008 at the Sheraton Hotel in Hamilton, was led by Irena Nikolova, Regional Program Advisor at CIC, and Yacouba Traoré, Bilingual Program Manager at the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Another workshop was held in Toronto on January 28, 2009. Despite the snow storm that blanketed the city that day, an impressive turnout was recorded. In attendance were participants from French-language organizations based in Windsor, London, Niagara, Hamilton

and Toronto. Hosted by Louise Sauvé-Dubois from Multiculturalism, CIC, and representatives of the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, the workshop helped participants understand the policies and requirements that govern Requests for Proposals. There were constructive and often very animated exchanges between participants and representatives, which led to a better understanding among all parties of the very real issues organizations face when lacking the financial means to take action in the area of French-language immigration.

On February 11 and 12, 2009, management and staff of the three organizations hosting the Network met again in Hamilton, this time to explore and share best practices in relation to intervention work with an immigrant clientele. This was an opportunity for all three organizations – *Centre de santé communautaire de Hamilton/Niagara*, *Centre francophone de Toronto and London-Sarnia ACFO* – to paint a picture of immigration in their respective region. This meeting gave rise to a new spirit of cooperation and information sharing. The agencies are committed to holding more regular, formal meetings of this kind.

A final workshop on the issue of governance was planned for March 2009, the last activity of that fiscal year.

### Organizational Development and Planning Meetings

As lead organizer of these meetings, the Central and Southwestern Network has led participants to focus more intensely on the issue of regionalization.

For instance, a survey was conducted in Peel region to assess the information needs of immigrants, as well as settlement and integration services provided to those who speak French. In addition, on January 17 and 30, 2009, in conjunction with the *Centre d'établissement des nouveaux immigrants de Peel*, the Network held discussion groups with immigrants and representatives of English-language and French-language service

organizations. From this local consultation emerged a key recommendation, i.e. to establish an independent umbrella organization responsible for speaking on behalf of all French-language organizations. The Network supports this community initiative.

On February 10, 2009, in Barrie, the Network organized a brainstorming session in conjunction with a Simcoe area community organization called *La Clé d'la Baie*. Various service organizations (English-language, French-language and immigrant) shared ideas on the issue of Francophone immigration.

A local consultation forum also held in Barrie on February 18, 2009 was attended by French-language organizations. Participants tackled the following issues:

- ▶ Facilitating the reception and settlement of French-speaking immigrants
- ▶ Making the host society more aware of the reality facing new immigrants
- ▶ Organizing and developing services for French-speaking immigrants
- ▶ Encouraging the social and economic integration of immigrants in such areas as employment, business, education, health, etc.
- ▶ Stimulating intercultural dialogue and cultural integration of immigrants and refugees wishing to settle in the region

### Upcoming Events

Planning for the new fiscal year is already underway, and greater emphasis will be placed on dealing with economic issues pertaining to Francophone immigration. A meeting with employers is already planned in order to discuss and find solutions to overcome obstacles in the hiring of French-speaking immigrants.



## News from the Eastern Network

Consultation accounts for the bulk of the work done by the Eastern Network. The discussion forum held in March was undoubtedly one of the high points of 2008, as it opened up talks on three major themes at the right time:

- French-speaking immigrant youth and families;
- Community economic development, social and private entrepreneurship;
- Education and professional development.

Discussions and deliberations led to a series of recommendations. These clearly demonstrate the need to act on several fronts in order to integrate immigrants and encourage them to stay and thrive. The following provides an overview of the major recommendations:

- Use the school as a key agent of integration
- Encourage the integration of parents into the school system
- Improve welcoming, communication and delivery of educational activities
- Encourage networking in the community's business environment
- Use the cooperative model as a method of integration, and support the work of *Copérative Franco-Présence*
- Set up a round table of leaders from different organizations in order to facilitate economic integration

### Network Milestones

During the first half of the year, the Eastern Network took an active part in the work of the Hire Immigrants Ottawa program, focusing the bulk of its efforts on developing plans of action for each of the communities in the Eastern Ontario region, specifically Ottawa, Cornwall, Kingston and the surrounding area. Each is managed by a local committee.

### Action Plan by Local Committees

The Ottawa local committee, which covers the National Capital area, aims to improve the employability of French-speaking immigrants. This is a complex challenge, considering the bilingual character of the region. Assistance from the National Francophone Economic

Development Network (RDÉE) and the *Conseil de la Coopération de l'Ontario* (CCO), both members of the local committee, greatly increases the prospect of convincing French-speaking employers to get involved. Work has begun on formulating strategies to encourage employers to hire French-speaking immigrants. Another project has also been launched to find innovative ways in which culture and art can help create jobs for French-speaking artists. Moreover, culture and art can play an important role in the social and cultural integration of immigrants into their host communities.

The local committee that oversees Cornwall and the surrounding area, including the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry County, also seeks to promote employability, but its focus is employment in an agricultural context. The emphasis is therefore on motivating employers and promoting employment opportunities in a rural setting.

The focus of the local committee responsible for Kingston and area is on developing a directory of French-speaking immigrants. The committee wants to find out what factors attract immigrants and motivate them to stay. Given that the region is mainly English-speaking, local committee members have expressed a desire to broaden the composition of their committee to include representatives from the English-speaking business community. Their next step is to organize awareness-raising activities to initiate the business community to the work and pursuits of the Eastern Network. They also plan to launch a project to promote the hiring of French-speaking immigrants in the hospitality sector.

### The Eastern Network and the Hire Immigrants Ottawa Initiative

In addition to its grassroots work, the Eastern Network maintains strategic ties with the Hire Immigrants Ottawa program, which has had great success with participating employers. A plan of action has been formulated to help employers identify barriers to employment as well as solutions to overcome obstacles in the hiring of immigrants. The Network has also published a guide to assist employers, in particular owners and managers of small and medium-sized businesses, with the hiring of foreign-trained professionals. Also, the Eastern Network has added a new priority to its list, i.e. to encourage French-speaking employers to turn to the Hire Immigrants Ottawa program for assistance.

**OTTAWA BUSINESS NEWS**

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The workforce is shrinking. Labour shortages are looming.

Ottawa employers are getting more creative in their search for top talent.

**Their winning strategy:**  
hiring highly skilled immigrants.

Find out who's doing it and how.  
Go to [hireimmigrantsottawa.ca](http://hireimmigrantsottawa.ca)  
for insight, helpful tools and links.

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